

FLIGHT FOUR INDIA

A Ladybird Book of Travel Adventure





NORTH SEA

LONDON

EUROPE

ATLANTIC
OCEAN

FRANCE

ITALY

ROME

BLACK SEA

SPAIN

MEDITERRANEAN
SEA

GREECE

TURKEY

SYRIA

RED
SEA

AFRICA

U. S. S. R.



AIR ROUTE TRAVELLED
BY ALISON AND JOHN



Series 587

Travel, in the story and pictures in this book, to India with Alison and John. Come with them to the land of temples and tigers, elephants, parrots and monkeys. You will enjoy your journey round India, seeing the great cities and the little villages, the soaring mountains and the hot plains, the holy River Ganges and the jungle. It is an exciting country of ancient mystery and modern industry.

A LADYBIRD
TRAVEL ADVENTURE
BOOK

FLIGHT FOUR: INDIA



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Publishers : Wills & Hepworth Ltd., Loughborough

First Published 1960

©

Printed in England

FLIGHT FOUR: INDIA

The great airliner flew eastwards towards India, and Alison and John tried to imagine the countries and oceans which lay thousands of feet beneath them. They stopped at Rome, and then flew over Greece, along the Mediterranean and high above Iraq, Persia and Pakistan. Finally, they flew over the Arabian Sea to Bombay, the famous 'Gateway to India'.

Their father told them some of the things they would see in India, great cities and little villages, mountains and the hot plains, and people—people of all kinds, but all Indians. He promised to take Alison to see some Indian dancing, and John a ride on an elephant, and, if they were lucky, the sight of a real, wild tiger.

The modern, luxurious airliner belonged to Air India, so the flight gave them a foretaste of the land they were going to visit. The crew and the stewards were Indians, and the food, which is always specially nice in the air, was excitingly Indian too.

A business friend of Father's met them at the airport. He was Mr. Ram Chand, and he waited with Mrs. Ram Chand and his two children, Gopal and his sister Shanti—which means Peace. Gopal and Shanti greeted Alison and John politely, putting the palms of their hands together and making a slight bow. They said *Nameste*, an Indian word of greeting. Then they stepped forward, took two garlands of flowers which their father was holding, and put them round the necks of Alison and John. The English children were astonished and charmed. They had arrived in India.



Father had to spend a week in Bombay on business, so Alison and John had a good chance to explore the great city. They stayed with the Chand family in their house on a hill, with a fine view of Bombay and the sea. Gopal and Shanti took them to see the famous Hanging Gardens and the Tower of Silence. In the city they saw modern blocks of offices in wide streets, full of traffic, and fascinating ancient temples. When they went inside a temple they took off their shoes, as boys take off their caps in England when they go into church.

"Once Bombay was only a little fishing village," Shanti said, "and now there are more than three million people."

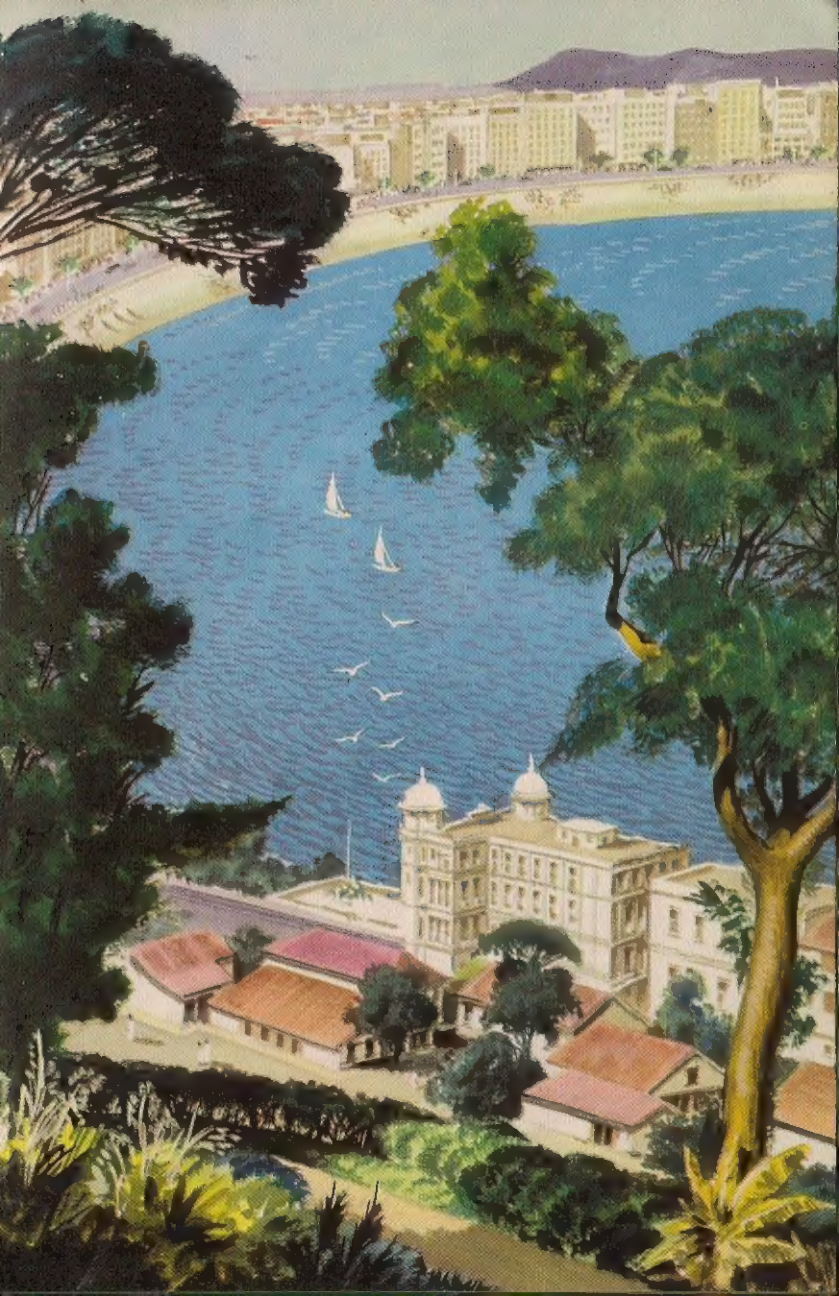
"The Sultan of Gujerat gave the village to the King of Portugal," Gopal added, "and he gave it to Charles II of England as a wedding present. Later it was given to the East India Company. Trade was developed, the marshes drained, and gradually this great city came into being."

John wrote these facts down in his notebook. When they went to see the huge granite gateway in the harbour Alison sketched it. "That is the symbol that Bombay is the Gateway to India," Shanti said.

In the evening they liked to go to the long sweeping promenade by the sea, and watch the people strolling there. Alison admired the pretty silk saris the Indian ladies wore.

"The ladies walk so gracefully," Alison said, "and they're very beautiful. And so are the children."

"Everyone seems to be very happy," said John.



One day Mr. Ram Chand took them all for a drive. They went along a good, modern road out of Bombay into a wide, flat countryside. Away to the north they could see the peaks of mountains, the Western Ghats. There were no neat, green fields with hedges as in England, but an endless expanse of cotton and rice fields. Mr. Chand explained that the cotton is grown to be made into cloth at the cotton mills in Bombay and other cities.

They stopped to see a village, and Alison made a sketch of the women at the well. The women walked as gracefully as dancers, with their brass water-jars on their heads. A man was ploughing with an ox-plough, and an old man was making pottery.

"Bombay is typical of the great, modern cities of India," said Mr. Chand, in his soft voice, "and this village is part of ancient India. India is full of little villages where people live quietly and simply. We are a peaceful people."

"Please sir," asked John, taking out his notebook and pencil, "how many people are there in India?"

"Watch out," said Father, "John's a terror for facts!"

"And a good thing too," Mr. Chand replied. "The population of India, John, is about 470 million. A seventh of the human race!"

John wrote that down. "That's an awful lot of people," he said.

"India is a large country," Mr. Chand explained. "It is two-thirds the size of Europe."



Alison and John learned a lot in their week at Bombay. They got used to the money. A rupee is worth about a shilling, and there are a hundred naya paise to the rupee. When they bought an ice cream, which would have cost sixpence at home, they paid fifty naya paise, or 'N.P.' as they were called. The wide-brimmed straw hats Father bought them, which would have cost about a pound at home, were twenty rupees each.

They began to get used to the glare of the sunshine day after day, and to the babble of the soft, musical voices in the crowded parts of the city.

They said good-bye to the kind Chand family and went by air to Aurangabad, a flight of an hour-and-a-half. Aurangabad was smaller than Bombay, but it had the same mixture of old and new. Father took them by car to see the famous caves at a place called Ellora. Monasteries and temples had been carved out of a mountain, and they were all richly decorated with carvings and paintings. The whole mountainside was full of them.

"These temples are among the wonders of the world," their father said, "so have a good look! That one is the Temple of Kailasa. It's as big as a cathedral, but it is all carved out of the rock!"

"But how did they do it?" John asked.

"With simple tools and a great deal of patience, John. It was made more than a thousand years ago, and I suppose it must have taken more than a hundred years to do."

"Just look at the carvings and paintings," said Alison. "People and animals, and all life-size!"

"They look real," said John. "Let's go inside."



The next day their father took them to see some more rock carvings at Ajanta. In a wild and lovely glen they saw another hill-side, crescent-shaped, with twenty-nine temples cut out of the mountain.

"These were carved between 200 B.C. and 700 A.D.," said Father. "They are in honour of the prophet Buddha, called 'the enlightened one'. He taught a new way of life."

They wandered about inside the temples. Their father explained that the paintings were all connected with stories about Buddha, and that some of them had been painted more than two thousand years ago.

"But weren't they clever, all those centuries ago!" said Alison, admiring a picture.

"Mr. Chand said," observed John, wisely, "that there was civilisation in India two thousand years before Britain stopped being a savage land."

"That's quite correct," replied Father. "When we in Britain were savages, people in India had well-planned cities, brick houses, baths and drainage, good roads, and literature and art. These wonders at Ajanta here, and at Ellora, prove that."

"But they are all so beautiful," said Alison.

"They might have been painted last year," their father said. "It makes you think, doesn't it!"



The next town Father had to visit was Agra, seven hundred miles north from Aurangabad. They went by train and Alison and John enjoyed every minute of the long journey. Indian trains are often hot and dusty, but this one was new and streamlined, and the carriages were air-conditioned and cool. The train sped across the hot plains of Northern India. They saw little villages, and they waved to the people who stopped to watch the train go by. Men were working in the rice and cotton fields. They saw carts drawn by oxen, slowly and patiently.

“Look!” John shouted suddenly, “over there, a line of camels, loaded with bales!”

“Oh! yes,” Alison replied, “real camels, miles from anywhere, on a journey.”

“We are travelling in a modern train,” said Father, with his ‘This is a Joke’ smile, “and there you see the ancient kind of train, the Camel Train!”

They had their meals in the cool dining-car, with wicker-covered chairs and polite stewards dressed in immaculate white. At lunch, or *Tiffin* as they had learned to call it, they had a delicious curried chicken, with all sorts of exciting extras—different fruits and powdered nuts and light, dry rice. Father had to ration the number of glasses of iced lemonade.

At the stations they watched the crowds of Indians of every race and creed. Everyone seemed very cheerful and good-natured. There were men in turbans, women in coloured saris, business men in European dress, dignified soldiers proud of their fine uniforms, and wise-looking priests.



There was much to see in Agra, and when their father had finished his business visits he took Alison and John to look around. The most exciting sight was the old fort, immensely strong and magnificent.

"This fort was built by the great Emperor Akbar," Father told them, "four hundred years ago, and Agra was once the capital of India." John wrote down the facts and Alison made a sketch of the great gate-towers. Inside the fort they saw the Sultan's palace and wandered among the maze of courtyards, trying to imagine they were living in the days of the great Akbar.

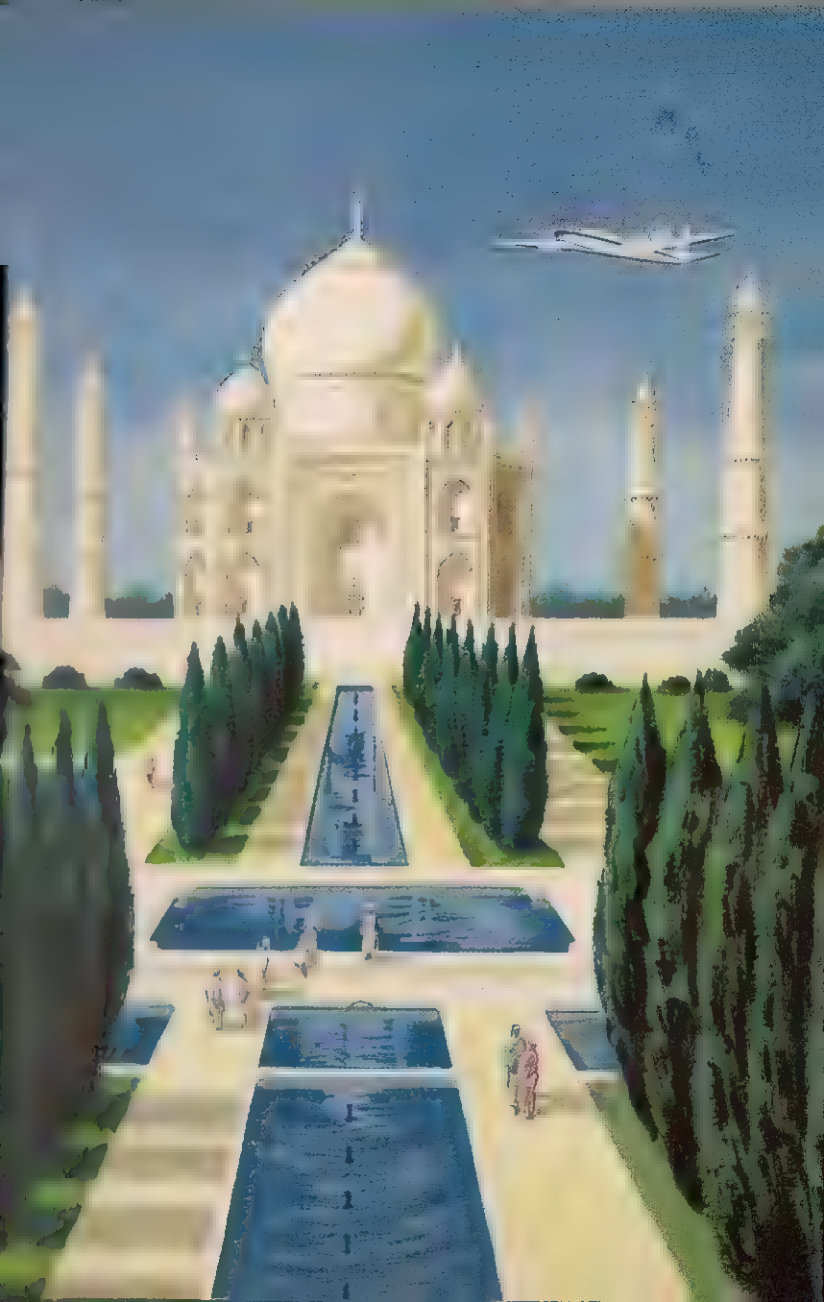
But there was something even more important to see, the most famous building in all India, the Taj Mahal. Father told them about it on the way there.

"The Taj Mahal is a tomb. It was built by Akbar's grandson, the Emperor Shah Jahan, in 1648. You see, Shah Jahan had a very beautiful wife, and he loved her dearly. She died, so he determined to build the loveliest tomb in the world—and he did. Look!"

They gazed at the Taj Mahal. The building, the great dome and the minarets, all of pure white marble, shone in the sunshine.

"It's like a dream," Alison said after a few moments.

"It took seventeen years to build, and the finest craftsmen in India worked on it," their father explained. "It is just as beautiful inside, too. They call it a poem in stone!"



Next they went on to Delhi, where their father had to spend a whole week; but that was not long enough for Alison and John. Delhi, the capital of India, is full of wonders old and new. They saw palaces, marble tombs, temples, Christian churches, and beautiful gardens.

In Old Delhi they spent a long time exploring the Red Fort, marvelling at more reminders of the ancient splendour of the great Indian emperors. In New Delhi they saw modern buildings and cleverly designed tree-lined avenues and gardens. They visited the garden in memory of the great Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, who died in 1948.

On one of their days in Delhi they all went to see a ceremonial procession at Parliament House. They waited in the crowd and John took a photograph of the fine soldiers on horseback. Father told them they were part of the bodyguard of the President of India. Alison made a drawing of the Indian flag.

"The colours are orange, white and green," she said, "but what's that in the middle?"

"It's a wheel, the national symbol of India—the spinning wheel," their father explained.

Then they heard the cheers as the procession approached. Alison and John were most excited when they saw it, because it was led by a most gorgeously dressed elephant.

"Look, oh look!" John said, "isn't he magnificent!"

"He's a grand ceremonial elephant," observed their father.

"And he knows it," Alison said. "Look how proud he is!"



Jaipur is about a hundred-and-fifty miles west of Delhi, and a business friend of their father took them there in his car. Mr. Lal Singh was a cheerful young man who wore a white suit and a turban.

The road was across a bare, hot desert, but now and again there was water, which made a fertile valley. Here they saw little villages, sometimes old forts, and men and women working in the fields. They also saw a lot of peacocks, with gorgeous tails.

They were going to see a polo match at Jaipur, so they talked of sport.

"Do they play football in India, sir?" John asked.

"Oh yes," replied Mr. Lal Singh, "but hockey is our national sport; and, of course, cricket. We have a Test Team as you know, and haven't you heard of Ranjitsinghi and Duleep Singh?"

"They both played for England," Father said, "and what wonderful batsmen they were!"

The polo match was tremendously exciting. Four men on each side galloped up and down the large field, striking the ball with their long-handled polo sticks. At intervals a bell rang and they rode off to change ponies.

"The ponies seem to love it!" Alison said.

"They do," said Mr. Lal Singh, "and they know nearly as much about the game as the riders."

"You've got to be a very good horseman to play polo," their father remarked. "It was the great game of the Indian princes."

"And it still is," said Mr. Lal Singh. "India is the home of polo."



Their next journey was northwards from Delhi, and Mr. Lal Singh very kindly drove them for the first part of their journey. He answered the many questions Alison and John asked him. They passed an elephant padding softly along a country road with people sitting unconcernedly on its back.

"Where are the people going on that elephant, sir?" John asked as they passed one.

"To the next town, John, taking people from a village," replied Mr. Singh.

"Like people at home go in the village bus," Father added.

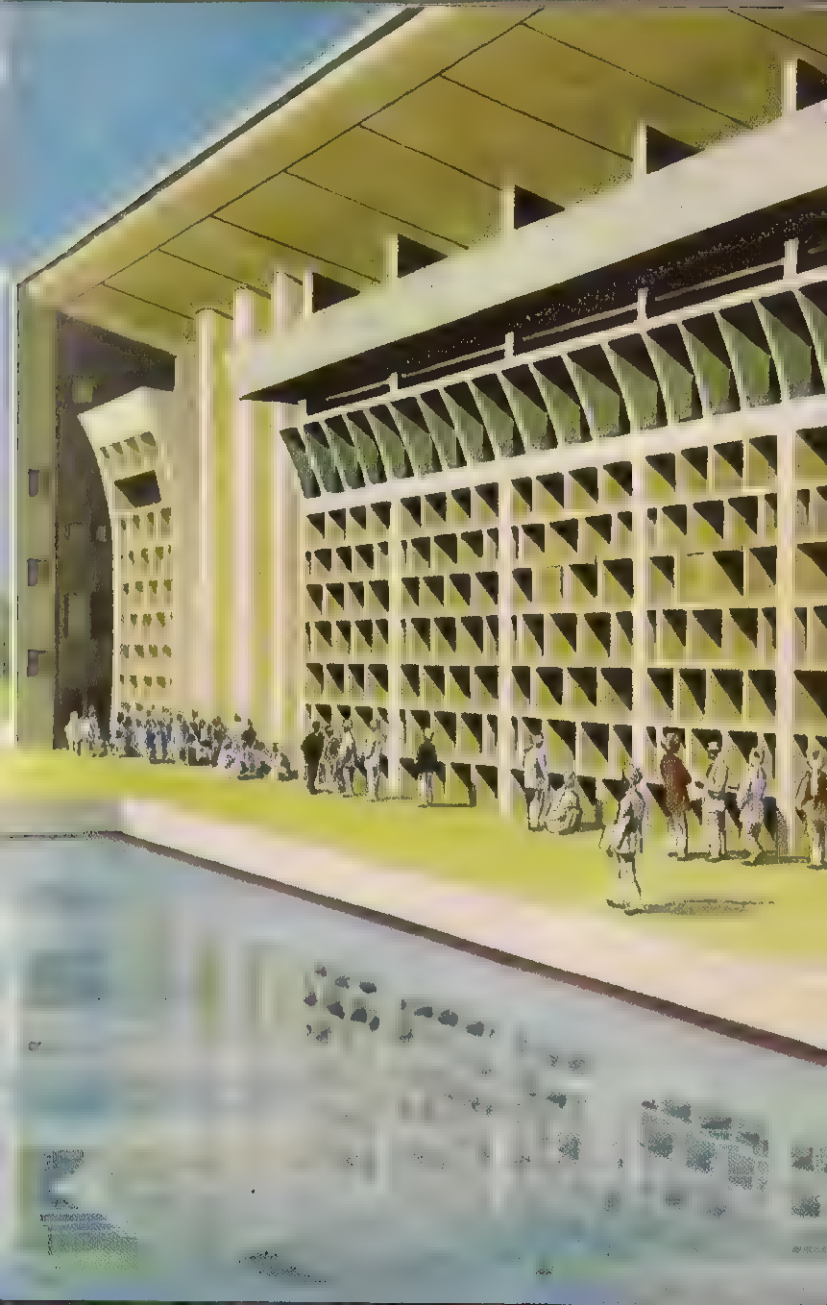
"What a wonderful country," said Alison, gazing at the elephant. "Fancy waiting for the *school elephant* instead of for the *school bus* in the morning!"

"And in the town the elephants are parked," Mr. Lal Singh said, "just as buses and cars are parked in England!"

At the end of five hours' driving they came to Chandigarh, a completely new city. Alison and John had seen a number of ancient towns in India, but this was something quite different. The setting was splendid, because to the north the foothills of the Himalayan mountains soared upwards.

Mr. Lal Singh explained that Chandigarh is a city of the future, designed on quite new ideas. The buildings are separated from the roads for safety. The town is divided into sectors, and each has its own set of houses, with its own schools, shops, health centre and swimming bath.

"It proves what you said the other day," said Alison to her father. "India is very ancient, but it is very modern as well."



One evening when they had stopped in a little town, Alison and John were allowed to wander off on their own while their father and Mr. Lal Singh sat over their coffee in the hotel. In the busy *bazaar*, or market, John bought two oranges from an old woman's stall.

"You know, John," Alison said, as she ate her orange, "there's something magic about India."

"You mean this bustle of so many people?" queried John, and then continued, "I wish I had a turban to wear, it must be cool."

"A turban would suit you," Alison said, imagining John wearing one. "At first I thought it funny for people to walk about in pyjamas, which shows how silly I was."

"They wore them here long before English people wore pyjamas to go to bed in," John added. "Mr. Lal Singh told me it's the Indian word for trousers made of cotton. I expect an Indian boy would laugh at us for wearing pyjamas for sleeping!"

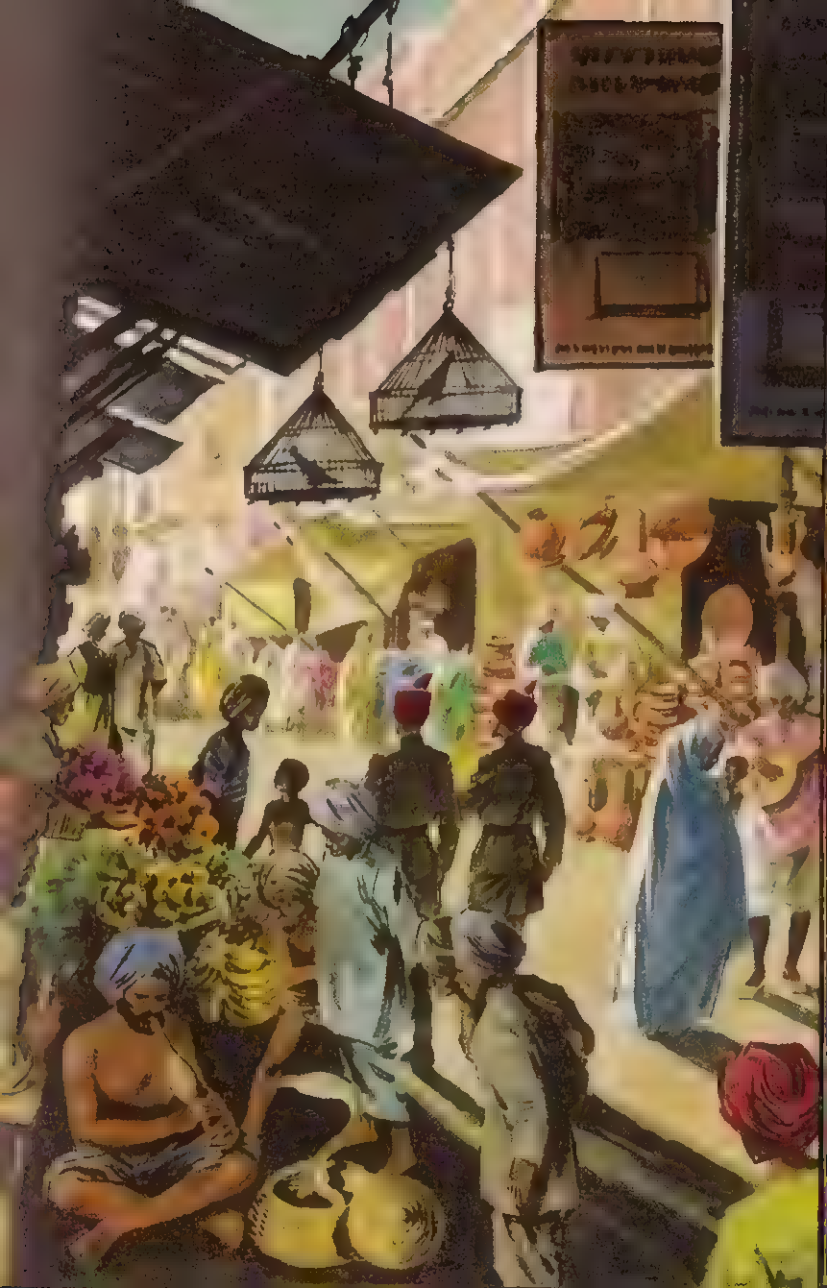
"Listen, John!" Alison said suddenly, "strange music!"

"It's coming from the street. And look—it's a snake charmer! Look at *that*!"

An old man sat on the ground, cross-legged, playing a strange looking pipe. A great snake was coiled up in front of him, and as the man played the snake raised its head, looked at him, and swayed from side to side. A little crowd gathered and Alison and John joined it.

"I bet that snake's a deadly one!" said John.

"That is what I mean by the magic of India!" said Alison.



Mr. Lal Singh turned out of their direct route northwards to show them one of the many dams being built in India. A fast-flowing river which came tumbling through the hills had been stopped by a great concrete wall. A large, blue lake had been formed behind the dam. Gleaming electric wires stretched away on their pylons from the buildings.

“It’s a hydro-electric plant!” said John.

“Quite right, John,” Mr. Lal Singh said. “The power of the river is used to drive turbines which make electricity. You see, power is very precious in India, because we only have a little coal. So we are harnessing the power of the rivers to make electricity for our factories and towns. And we are also diverting rivers to water our fields and improve our crops.”

“There’s a big dam which was built recently on the other side of India,” Father said. “It was built by Canadians as a present to India, to show their friendship.”

“What a wonderful present,” Alison said.

“What a splendid idea,” John said, as he gazed at the dam, “to use a river, which just flows along, to drive machinery, to make electricity, and to drive other machinery hundreds of miles away!”

They drove on northwards into the state of Kashmir, higher and higher into the Himalayan mountains. The road wound and twisted amid awe-inspiring scenery. Snow-capped peaks shone in the distance, and in the fertile valleys wild flowers grew everywhere. There were terraced fields of rice and maize. The people had the sturdy look and the springy step of mountain folk. The air was fresh and sweet.



They stayed at Srinagar, in the north-west corner of Kashmir. The town is built on both banks of the river Jhelum, and along the edge of a big lake. To the children's delight they stayed on a houseboat moored at the side of the lake. They went for a trip down the river in a long, narrow Indian boat with an awning, and they went shopping in Srinagar and bought a Kashmir shawl to take home for their mother.

After four days at Srinagar among the mountains, they flew south to Delhi and then changed into another aeroplane. This took them two-hundred-and-fifty miles south-east to Lucknow. They found it an exciting city, with fantastic old palaces built long ago, the usual crowded and fascinating streets and some dignified modern ones. Their father took them to see the ruins of a large house called 'The Residency.'

"This is the scene of the famous Seige of Lucknow," he said. "In the Indian Mutiny of 1857 the British garrison was besieged here for five months, until they were rescued."

"Look," said John, "you can still see the marks of the bullets and cannon balls!"

They went for a drive into the country and stopped for a picnic in the shade of a mango tree. When they got out of the car there was a great commotion. A large flock of green parrots flew up noisily from the trees, and monkeys chattered at them as they swung from branch to branch.

"What a country!" Alison said. "The sun shines every day, and when you go out for a drive and stop for a picnic, the trees are full of parrots and monkeys!"



Following their stay in Lucknow they went by train to Benares. After lunch in the dining car, John asked suddenly, "Where are we exactly?"

"Get out the map, John, and I'll show you."

"Father," said Alison very nicely, "please draw us a map; one of your nice, funny ones."

"They're not meant to be funny!" said her father. John pulled the two middle pages out of his exercise book and they put things on the corners. Father drew the shape of India, with a line of shading along the top.

"The Himalayan mountains!" John said.

"Right, my lad. One of the greatest mountain ranges in the world. Beyond them is Russia and, away to the east, China. Now what shall I put in?"

"The rivers, please," replied Alison.

"India is a land of rivers. I'll put in the three most important ones. As you know, rivers run down from the mountains. Now here is the Ganges—'Mother Ganga' they call it. We are going down the valley of the Ganges now. I expect we are just about *here*. I'll draw a little engine. There! This whole valley of the Ganges is full of rivers, that's why it's such a rich and fertile area. I'll draw in two other important rivers. The Jumna, that's here and—a lovely name—the Brahma-putra."

"That's a jolly good map," John exclaimed.

"Please, Father," said Alison, "put in the places we've been to, and where we are going. And some little drawings."



Father finished off his map with the little pictures which told Alison and John some of the things about India. As he put the finishing touches to the little elephant at Delhi, he asked suddenly, "Do either of you know about the monsoon?"

"Yes," answered John, "it's a jolly little animal that kills snakes."

"That's a mongoose, silly!" Alison said. "What is a monsoon?"

"It's a season of the year. It breaks, as they say, in June and lasts until September. That is when it rains in India."

"How nice to have rain when you know it's coming," John said, "instead of when it feels like it."

"The summer in India is very, very hot," Father said. "We think it's hot now, but my word, if you were here in the summer you wouldn't know what to do with yourselves. Lucky people go up to the hills, where it's cooler. In the plains of India you have to use air-conditioned buildings, or have big fans."

"Tell us about Benares, please," said Alison.

"We'll be there soon and you'll see for yourselves," replied her father. "It's a huge place, sprawling alongside the river Ganges, and it is the holy city of the Hindus."

"I suppose it is full of temples, then?" John said.

"Temples and shrines. Millions of Hindu pilgrims come every year to Benares from all over India. They believe they wash away their sins in the sacred Ganges. You'll see the river is lined with stone landing places, where the pious Hindus bathe."



They stayed at Benares for several days and had a fine time exploring the ancient city, with its shrines and temples, and the modern university. They watched the pilgrims, who had come from every part of India, as they prayed at the shrines on the Pilgrims' Way, washed themselves joyously in the sacred Ganges and went to the temples.

"India seems to be a very religious country," said Alison.

"Religion is an important part of their lives," Father replied.

"But there are so many different religions," said John.

"Want some facts, John?" queried his father. "Get your book out. The main religion is Hinduism. There are something like three-hundred million Hindus in India. Next are the Moslems, about thirty-five millions. But there are also very many Christians, Sikhs and Buddhists, and other faiths as well. But you have to be here a long time to understand them all."

After their stay at Benares they had another long train journey, four-hundred miles to the east, to Darjeeling. They went down the valley of the Ganges and then up towards the mountains.

They left the big train and changed into an exciting little one, which took them up seven thousand feet to Darjeeling. It was an enchanting journey. They went through wild jungle and then through forests, where they saw wild buffaloes and, a great thrill, a herd of wild elephants.

Darjeeling was a bright, cheerful town with sweet mountain air. They saw people being taken about in rickshaws, which are carriages with large wheels, pulled by men.



They stayed in Darjeeling for a week, and they loved the gay town in the mountains with the brightly coloured buildings. They often went out of the town and lay on the soft grass to gaze at the distant peaks of the Himalayas. It was exciting to be able to see the famous Mount Everest. Their father asked them what they knew about Everest.

“It is the highest peak in the world,” John said promptly.

“And it was climbed by Sir Edmund Hillary,” said Alison, “with a clever mountain guide named Mr. Tensing.”

“Right,” said Father. “The expedition was led by Sir John Hunt. Tensing is a Sherpa, from the country north of here. He lives in Darjeeling now, in charge of a mountaineering school.”

Father told them about the gallant climb as they gazed at the distant peaks, imagining the little flags held up proudly by Hillary and Tensing when they set foot on the very top of the highest mountain in the world.

All round Darjeeling they saw tea gardens, and they wanted to know how tea was grown, picked and dried. Their father told them that some of the very best tea in the world was grown around Darjeeling.

“When I have a cup of tea at home,” Alison said thoughtfully, “I shall think of this beautiful place, the mountains and the smiling people.”



Perhaps the most exciting train journey they made in India was from Darjeeling to Jorhat. It was a journey of three-hundred-and-fifty miles, which took them almost to the frontier of Burma. Not far away was China.

At first the train ran through mile after mile of tea gardens, and then the country became wilder, with tall, waving grass and jungle.

"I should keep a sharp look out if I were you," their father said, "you might see wild animals. Rhinos, wild buffalos, wild boars, deer, and perhaps wild elephants."

"Any tigers or leopards?" John asked hopefully.

"There could be, but not in the day-time near the railway; yet you never know your luck!"

They gazed out of the windows of the train. Alison saw some wild elephants in the distance and John *thought* he saw a tiger. But as no-one ~~else~~ saw it, the tiger was left as a 'might have been.'

There was no doubt, however, about the animals they saw a few days later. They were taken to the great wild game reserve near Jorhat and had a glorious day. They rode slowly through the jungle on the back of an elephant named Laxmi, who was pleased to share their lunch. While sitting quietly on the elephant they saw, quite close-to, a one-horned rhino and her baby. Father told them that they were very rare, but quite safe in the Game Sanctuary, because no animal could be shot or captured.

They saw many sorts of wild animals, and many monkeys and parrots. Their favourites were the animals with long, striped tails, called lemurs.



Father's next visit was to the great city of Calcutta. They went by air, and during the flight Alison asked him how it was so many people in India spoke English.

"Because for the past two hundred years Britain ruled India," he said. "We can be very proud of that. Under British rule this teeming continent of many different races became one great country. The ports, the great roads and railways, the bridges and tunnels, were all built by British engineers. Our doctors learned how to prevent some of the terrible diseases which killed people in thousands. We founded hospitals, schools, and universities, for Indians. And law was established, with the same justice for everyone, rich and poor. Everywhere in India you can see the results of the work of British people who devoted their lives to India."

"But why isn't India British now?" asked John.

"Because the time came when India wanted to be free to manage her own affairs," his father replied. "It was quite natural. Their demand for freedom was led by Mahatma Gandhi, that great man I told you about when we were in Delhi. In 1947 the British rule ended, and India became a self-governing nation."

"But Britain and India are still friends, aren't they?" Alison asked anxiously.

"Of course, very good friends indeed. India is a member of the British Commonwealth," answered Father. "But look, there's Calcutta below us. The largest city in India. There's the Hooghly river, and you can see the famous Howrah Bridge!"

"What an enormous city!" said John, looking down.



They had been staying in Calcutta for four days when Father suddenly said, "Well, John, tell us about this place."

John opened his notebook, found the page and read: "Calcutta is on the river Hooghly and big ships come up the river from all over the world. It is a very large, busy city, with three-and-a-half million people in it. It is in the state of West Bengal and there are real, wild tigers not far away."

"Oh, John and his tigers!" said Alison.

"He may see a tiger yet." Father said, "but not walking about in Calcutta. Go on, John, what else?"

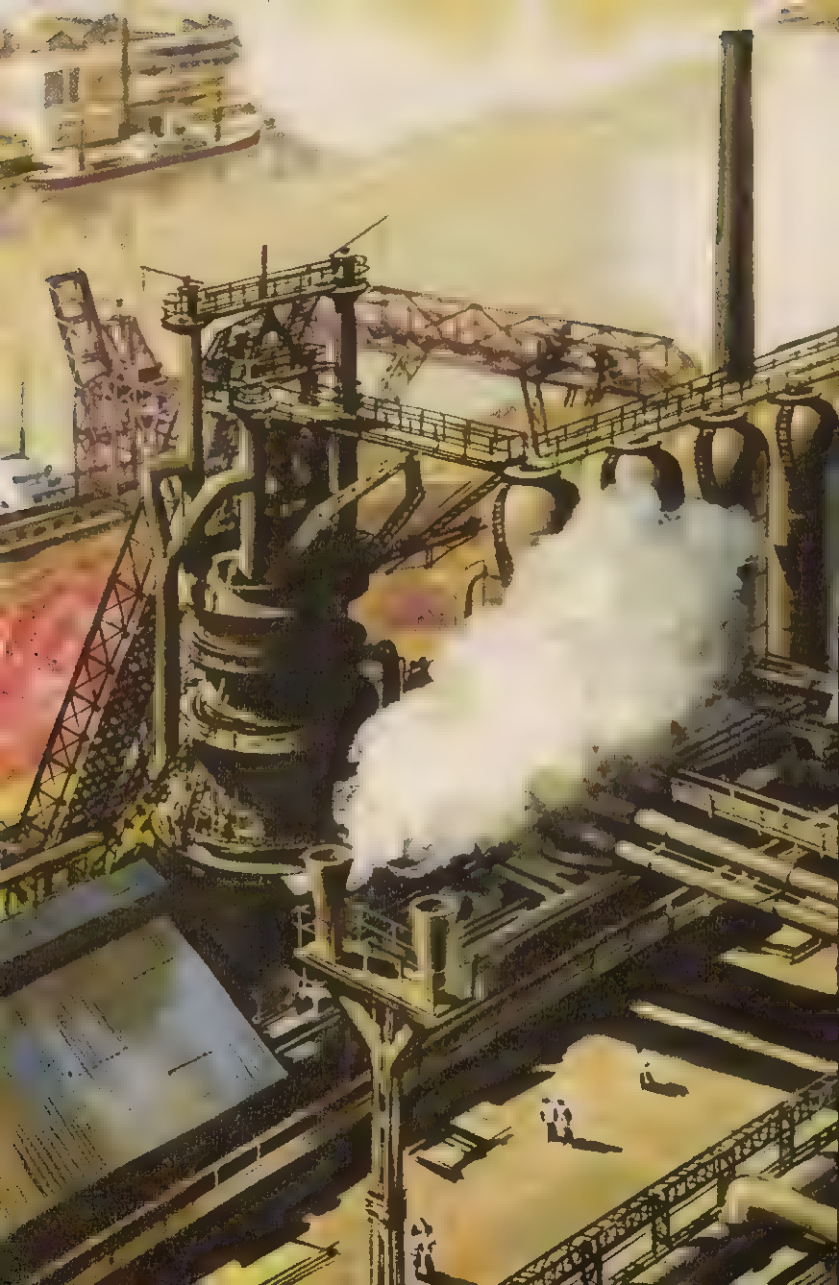
"Calcutta is the world's biggest place for jute, and on the river there are many steel works, iron works, and big factories of all kinds. By the way, what is jute?"

"The fibre of certain plants. It is used for making rope, sacking, and coarse cloth," replied Father. "It is sent all over the world."

John wrote that down. Then he read on, "Calcutta has fine, broad streets with super modern buildings, old temples which are pretty, and the usual crowded narrow bazaars. Right in the middle is a very large park, called the Maidan. It is all green grass with water tanks and statues. There are football and cricket grounds, and a racecourse."

"Not bad at all," said Father. "Now let's go out and buy presents for Mother and Mary and Peter."

They went out and strolled down a busy street full of people—Indians, Europeans, Chinese, Americans—all sorts. They bought some slippers for Mother, a doll in Indian dress for Mary, and to please John, a toy tiger for Peter.



Their next journey was a long flight southwards from Calcutta to Madras. It was so hot in Madras that they were glad to get to the cool rooms of their hotel. They went sightseeing the next day, but went early before it got too hot.

"There are a hundred things to see in Madras," Father said, "but first we must go to Fort St. George." When they got there he said, "Have either of you heard of Lord Clive?"

"Wasn't he a famous soldier?" Alison asked.

"A very famous soldier," observed Father. "But when he came to Madras in 1744 he was only a clerk in the East India Company. They had a trading station at Madras here, and another in Calcutta. Robert Clive was only a boy. He was poor, homeless and friendless. This is where he came, to Fort St. George. Madras was only a small ramshackle village then."

"What happened to him?" queried John.

"The French had a trading post a little way down the coast, and war broke out between Britain and France," he explained. "Clive was taken prisoner, escaped, and became a soldier. He was a very good soldier, and before long he was commanding an army. He beat the French, and an Indian prince who brought a large army against him."

"Clive made friends with the other Indian princes and—to cut a long story short—he won India for Britain. From the victories won by Robert Clive grew British India, and from British India this great and beautiful country we are visiting."

"And here in Fort St. George he was poor and home-sick!" said Alison, dreaming.

"But he won all India!" repeated John.



“We’ve seen most of the sights of Madras,” their father said one day. “The long water-front and the beaches, and you’ve swum in the Bay of Bengal. We’ve seen the temples and the Christian churches, and we’ve strolled through the bazaars.”

“And sniffed the magic scent of musk and sandalwood and exciting spices!” interjected Alison.

“Now I’m going to take you somewhere quite different. A business friend of mine has arranged to take us round the locomotive works.”

As they went round the great works, their friend explained that four-fifths of the people of India lived in villages and worked on the land. But a modern nation must have industry, so India was developing her own. All over India factories and works were being built. In the works they saw that everyone, from the clever engineers at the top, to the skilled craftsmen, were Indians. It was a sign of a new, modern India.

That evening they saw something which belonged to ancient India. Father’s friend took them to a temple in the evening. They took off their shoes, went inside, and sat down quietly in a beautiful courtyard. There they watched a Hindu temple dancer.

The music was fascinating and strange, and someone sang in a high-pitched voice. The dancer wore wonderful clothes as she portrayed a religious dance in honour of “The Lord Shiva, Lord of the Dance and Creator of the Universe.” Every step and movement, every gesture of hands and fingers, had religious meaning. It was a strange, moving experience.



The last stage of their travels took them south by train from Madras, down towards the southern point of India. Father stopped at Trichinopoly and Madura, and Alison and John had time for a quick look round these towns. They had learned much since they first explored Bombay. They knew about Indian money, which fruits or sweets to buy, and they could even speak a few words of Hindi, the language of India.

When they went on southwards, their father had a treat in store for them. He took them to the Periyar wild game sanctuary. A hundred square miles of jungle was set aside where wild animals could live in safety, with no risk from the hunter.

Father took them on a huge lake in a launch, and they went quietly round the edge, peering into the jungle. John sat with his camera ready. Although he didn't say anything, the others knew that he had one great wish, to see a real, live tiger before he went home.

They saw a great many monkeys and parrots, of course; they had seen them all over India. They saw a herd of wild elephants ambling through the long grass and Alison made a quick sketch of them.

It was in the evening that they saw some spotted deer suddenly raise their heads and trot away. Then the grass by the lakeside parted and—he was there. Like a huge cat he looked round and then, delicately, he began to drink, lapping the water. John was so excited that he forgot all about his camera. He just gazed and gazed at the real Indian tiger.



The last journey down India was to Trivandrum, and for most of the way they went through tea, coffee and rubber plantations. John added them to his list of crops he had seen. The most important were cotton, around Bombay, rice in many places, tea near Darjeeling, and jute. Alison helped him to make a list of fruits. It included coconuts, bananas, melons, mangoes, guavas, oranges, and other strange fruits they couldn't spell.

They stayed at Trivandrum and were taken by car to Cape Comorin. They stood on the seashore and looked out over the Indian Ocean, which stretched away thousands of miles to the South Pole.

"This is the southern tip of India," their father said. "To-morrow we fly back to Bombay, and we shall be back where we started—and shall have travelled right round India."

"And then we fly home!" said Alison, rather sadly.

"Don't you want to go home?" Father asked.

"Yes, of course. But I don't want to leave India!"

"Nor do I!" said John, "and when I'm grown up I'm going to come back, and stay much longer."

"It's such a kind country," Alison said thoughtfully, "and peaceful, too. It's horrid to see so many beggars and very poor people, of course. But so many people are gracious and good-looking."

"I like the great mountains," said John, "and the valley of the Ganges, full of people and colour and excitement, and all the old temples. And I like to think of the British people who lived here and helped to make India a great nation. And I like the animals—especially that tiger!"





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